



UNITED STATES SENATE
BUDGET COMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER CHUCK GRASSLEY

Opening Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee
Hearing on “No Rights to Speak of: The Economic Harms of Restricting Reproductive
Freedom”
Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

We’re tackling a very serious topic this morning. Abortion is above all a moral and legal issue.

It’s not an issue that lends itself to being looked at solely through an economic lens. After all, life is priceless.

There’s a reason this committee historically hasn’t delved into abortion. It’s not an issue easily distilled down to dollars and cents typical of budget issues.

In fact, it’s rather dehumanizing.

The Chinese communists are the best example of this, when they instituted their one child policy targeting female babies to exterminate. And, they did this thinking it would help their economy. But look what happened. Now, they realize it’s backfiring and hurting their economy. I think right now, we just saw statistics, they’re no longer the largest population country in the world, being supplanted by India.

Look at western nations like our own. We also realize we need more people to sustain the economy and protect social security. That’s one reason we’re one of the most immigrant-wealthy nations, taking one million people legally every year.

So, yes, having and raising children has costs, but so does abortion on demand and a culture that lacks respect for human life.

That said, here we are.

I’m pro-life, I’m pro-woman and I’m pro-family. These views are not in conflict.

Worthy alternatives to abortion exist in all but the rarest of circumstances. Numerous programs at the federal, state and local levels are available to help women, children and families in need.

To better assist families, Congress should focus on reforms that increase coordination between federal programs, simplify access, reduce duplication, promote work or education and eliminate marriage penalties in our tax laws.

For years, I’ve been a champion of supporting moms and kids. I’ve worked to support and improve our adoption and foster care systems. I’ve long been a strong supporter of tax incentives and laws to promote adoption and reduce financial burdens associated with adopting a child. As then-chairman of the tax-writing Finance Committee, now twenty years ago, I helped shepherd the bipartisan tax release package that

included a much-needed update on the adoption tax credit. Additionally, I'm a member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and founder and cochair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth. I have worked for years to improve policies and support for those who open their hearts and homes to children in need.

I'm also an advocate of the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program, which serves many mothers and children across Iowa and other states. It's critical that we support the most vulnerable in our society, and this program has been a successful tool to improve the livelihoods of at-risk families.

This Congress, I've introduced the bipartisan [*Healthy Moms and Babies Act*](#) with Senator Maggie Hassan.

The bill is a culmination of my work as Finance Committee chairman, where I solicited ideas from senators and stakeholders, including Iowa health care providers and advocates, on ways to improve maternal and child care.

The public is debating many abortion issues following the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision.

Today, this committee will hear from two witnesses who can tell us about the types of programs supporting pregnant women and families. We will also hear how folks in our local communities stand by their neighbors to let them know they aren't alone and have options.

That's the type of message everyone can get behind.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank [you to] all of our witnesses for appearing today.

